

Appendix to “*A Thinking Guide to Inclusive Childcare*”

Conversation Page - INVITING PARENTS TO TALK

In general, parents want their children to be safe and well cared for, to be liked and respected, to have friends, to learn and to be happy. When inviting parents to talk, ask questions with these factors in mind. (See the related section of the guide - Inviting Parents to Talk)

Child: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____
Reporters: _____

1. What are some of the things (your child) is noticing now with the most interest and enthusiasm?
2. When (your child) is upset, what is soothing?
3. What kinds of situations does (your child) find stressful or upsetting?
4. At this time, what could we do to support (your child) well related to:
 - ___ eating and drinking
 - ___ toilet use
 - ___ managing clothes
 - ___ preparing for naps and waking from naps
 - ___ getting washed
 - ___ playing alone
 - ___ playing with others
 - ___ switching from one activity to another
 - ___ any specific frustrations related to being in groups
5. What have you noticed about (your child's) sensitivity, if any,
 - ___ to touch - any physical sensations that your child wants or wants to avoid?
 - ___ to light or brightness - any attractions or avoidance to light?
 - ___ to sound - any attractions or avoidance to sound?
6. At this time, how does (your child) let you know, or how can you tell, if s/he is not feeling well or needs something?
7. Is there any information we should have related to food allergies, environmental health or safety, or any other individual safety needs?

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Conversation Page - GETTING TO KNOW A CHILD

When your role is to facilitate learning through play and other daily activities such as eating, dressing, grooming, etc., what is usable information?

Usable information is different than a score, a ranking or comparisons to other children of a similar age and size (or your children at a similar age). It is different than describing someone as *higher* or *lower functioning*, a diagnostic category or a disability classification.

Usable information helps you answer the question: *Who is this child?* Actively trying to get to know a child through interactions with her/him makes it easier and more interesting to facilitate learning. (See the related section of the guide - Getting to Know a Child)

Child: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

Reporters: _____

1. What does (this child) value?
2. What is (this child's) temperament?
3. What kinds of relationships does (this child) establish?
4. What are (this child's) current methods of communicating?
5. How does (this child) interact with the sensory world?
6. How does s/he respond to situational problems, e.g. when something falls down, or when s/he wants something out of reach?
7. How does s/he try to cope with the experience of frustration?
8. What helps (this child) learn?

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Conversation Page - UNDERSTANDING A CHILD’S BEHAVIOR

BEHAVIOR means actions, what the child did - without analysis or judgment.

It is helpful and more accurate to describe a child’s actions in clearly recognizable terms and acknowledge that sometimes adults do not know what to do. From a child’s perspective, it might be the adult’s expectations that are challenging.

CONTEXT refers to what else was happening, when the action is more likely to occur, who else is involved, where this occurs, what the environmental (comfort) conditions were, what happened first, and with a recurring behavioral concern - when did it start?

It is unlikely that young children think of themselves as misbehaving or many of the other words that adults use to describe them. **From their perspectives, children are doing the best they can, they are trying.** When situations are challenging, they are trying to make them work and coping to the best of their abilities. (See the related section of this guide - Understanding a Child’s Behavior)

Child: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____
Reporters: _____

1. Describe (this child’s) actions so that a stranger would recognize what you are talking about:
 - A. What exactly do you see, hear, or feel this child doing?
 - B. What’s the direction of her/his attention?
 - C. What do you notice about her/his energy or intensity?
2. Describe the context in which these actions are more likely to occur.
3. What do you imagine s/he is experiencing when these actions occur?
4. What is s/he probably hearing, seeing, feeling, wanting, and needing?
5. How do you imagine s/he understands this situation?
6. What do you guess s/he needs or is trying to accomplish?
7. What is the possible function or message of these actions?
8. With ease of language, what would s/he say?
9. What might help?
 - > To prevent the unwelcome actions?
 - > To help this child participate?
 - > To help her/him better the situation and expectations?
 - > To help this child cope with a stressful situation?

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Conversation Page - COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS ABOUT THEIR CHILD

When you are communicating for professional reasons about someone else's child, it is wise to think carefully about your purpose, your message and your attitude. With our choice of words we can try to reflect a child's perspective or experience and we can offer our most responsible and respectful guesses about a child's point of view.

Parents want to hear that their child is liked, safe and happy. They want to hear that their children are learning. Talking with parents should never be about masking the truth or ignoring relevant information. If you are a caring and accurate reporter, chances are better that you will be heard. Remember that reporting details is different than providing your judgments or emotions about those details. (See the related section in this guide - Communicating with Parents About Their Children)

Child:_____ Age:_____ Date:_____
Reporters:_____

1. Establish the time of day and general context.
2. Describe the child's actions in recognizable and relatable terms; just what you saw and heard.
3. Describe your best guess about what the child would have said with ease of language.
4. Discuss the kind of support you think might be helpful; what you will teach her/him to do.

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Conversation Page - POSSIBLE COACHING QUESTIONS

If you want staff to think about their actions in relation to the children who they support in the classroom or center, ask questions and make time for conversations. **If you want to cultivate a thinking/reflecting professional, ask questions that invite people to think/reflect.**

Coaching questions can remind people that they have strategies to apply. They can organize what they already know about a child and focus on the most usable bits of information. (See the related section in this guide - Possible Coaching Questions)

Staff Member: _____ Date: _____
Conversation Partner: _____

1. What is your concern?
2. What exactly are you noticing? What would you rather have happen?
3. What have you learned so far that seems positive and significant?
4. How do you think:
 - > The curriculum / activities are working?
 - > Your expectations are working?
 - > Your interactions and relationship are working?
 - > The instructional methods are working?
5. What adjustments would make sense?
6. What will you do next?
7. Follow-up date.